



**WESTERN
FUELS
ASSOCIATION
INC.**

*The National
Fuel Supply
Cooperative*

August 6, 2007

BY ELECTRONIC FILING

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The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 670
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Ex Parte No. 670, *Establishment of the Rail
Energy Transportation Advisory Committee*

Dear Secretary Williams:

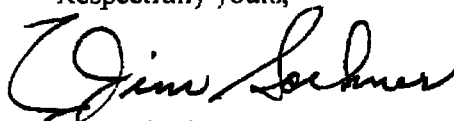
The purpose of this letter is to nominate and recommend Duane L. Richards to serve as a member of the Rail Energy Transportation Advisory Committee (RETAC) to be established by the Surface Transportation Board (Board) as announced in the Board's recent decision of July 17, 2007.

The Board is establishing RETAC to serve as a forum for discussion of issues relating to the transportation by rail of energy resources, including coal. Mr. Richards is CEO of Western Fuels Association, Inc. (WFA). WFA is a non-profit fuel supply cooperative formed in 1976 as the Nation's first fuel supply cooperative. It currently represents 21 consumer-owned utilities. WFA exists to assist its members in obtaining coal and coal transportation at reasonable delivered prices. WFA pursues those objectives by managing coal mines (through affiliated companies), managing a private rail car fleet, and purchasing coal, and coal transportation, for some of its members.

I know Mr. Richards through my Company's association with WFA as a member. Mr. Richards is well-qualified to serve as a RETAC member. He has a breadth and depth of knowledge on rail energy transportation matters, with over 20 years experience in rail transportation and fuel supply matters, including 3 years as CEO of WFA, approximately 18 years fuels experience with a large investor owned utility, and 10 years experience with a major coal supplier. He is intimately familiar with the important railroad economic, infrastructure, and service issues that will challenge RETAC. Mr. Richards would bring to RETAC a sharp perspective born of long and personal experience, toward helping the Board bring about effective railroad regulatory policies and oversight to ensure that rail energy customers have access to adequate and reliable transportation by rail. I believe that Mr. Richards would be effective in helping RETAC to carry out its mandate to provide independent and candid policy advice to the Board, while also helping to foster effective communication among suppliers, carriers, and users of energy resources.

I commend Mr. Richards to the Board's favorable consideration.

Respectfully yours,


C. Jim Soehner